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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY REACHES \$800,000 SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT
WITH GOVERNMENT IN MEDICARE FRAUD CASE**

Baltimore, Maryland- Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, and Janet Rehnquist, Inspector General of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, announced today that Johns Hopkins University reached a \$800,000 settlement agreement with the federal government in connection with fraudulent Medicare billings. The settlement with the University resolves a federal investigation under the False Claims Act involving billings to Medicare by physicians of various specialties who are employed by Johns Hopkins University and practice at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

The investigation arose out of the Physicians at Teaching Hospitals (PATH) project, a national fraud initiative, of the Office of Inspector General. According to the government's investigation under the False Claims Act, Johns Hopkins University submitted or caused the submission of false claims for payment to the Medicare program during a period from January 1994 through December 1994 for

medical services that the University certified had been personally rendered by certain identified physicians, but for which there was insufficient documentary evidence to show that such physicians actually performed the services. Instead, such services were performed by medical residents, including clinical fellows. As a result of these billings, the government asserted that Johns Hopkins University received Medicare payments to which it was not entitled.

Under the False Claims Act and the Civil Monetary Penalties Law, a health care provider who knowingly submits false claims to the Medicare Program may be liable for treble damages and up to \$11,000 per false claim.

The health care fraud investigation and settlement were handled by Assistant United States Attorneys Nadira Clarke and Roann Nichols, and the Office of Audit Services and Office of Counsel to the Inspector General at the Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services.